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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/027,433	12/21/2001	Delwin Jackson	5393	1883

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EXAMINER

BARR, MICHAEL E

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1762

DATE MAILED: 02/28/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/027,433

Applicant(s)

JACKSON ET AL

Examiner

Michael Barr

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 February 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 8 and 13-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 8, and 13-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments and amendments, filed 2/12/2003, have been fully considered and reviewed by the examiner. In light of the amendments, the rejections to the claims under 35 USC 112 and 102 have been withdrawn by the examiner. The examiner acknowledges the cancellation of Claims 6-7 and 9-12. Claims 1-5, 8, and 13-17 are pending.

The applicant's arguments against the Bellantone reference are moot in light of the withdraw of the rejection.

The applicant has argued against the combination of the Oku and Deith references. The examiner is not persuaded by the applicant's arguments. In response to applicant's argument that the examiner's conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning, it must be recognized that any judgment on obviousness is in a sense necessarily a reconstruction based upon hindsight reasoning. But so long as it takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper. See *In re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). The applicant argues that there is no motivation in the prior art for the combination of the Oku and Deith references. Oku teaches applying an antimicrobial agent to a substrate by providing a ceramic substrate, providing a conventional silica-based glaze containing an antimicrobial agent (silver oxide, silver-containing ion exchange compound), applying the glaze to the substrate and heating to form a finished coating on the substrate, as set forth in the previous office action. Oku teaches that the ceramic

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substrate can be ceramic tile or earthenware (Abstract) and that the glaze can be a conventional silica-based glaze. Oku fails to teach applying the microbial agent with a sol-gel. Deith is applied by the examiner to teach applying a silica-based glaze to a ceramic substrate by a sol-gel method, as an alternative to a conventional, high temperature firing glaze. Deith teaches that the glaze can be applied to ceramic substrates, such as ceramic tiles and earthenware (Pg. 6, lines 9-10; Pg. 7, lines 10-11). One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it suggested to them, after review of the Oku and Deith references, to modify the Oku process by using the sol-gel glaze method of Deith to apply the glaze of Oku, where antimicrobial agent is merely added to the sol-gel glaze composition, with the expectation of gaining the additional benefit of providing the desired ceramic glaze layer in Oku at lower heat treating temperatures than with the conventional glaze of Oku, as is taught by Deith, since Deith clearly teaches that the sol-gel glaze is used for glazing the same materials (ceramic tile and earthenware) as that of Oku and that the low temperature firing, sol-gel glaze is a known alternative to the higher temperature firing, conventional glaze, such as that of Oku. Therefore, it is the examiner's position that there is motivation in the prior art to the combination of the Oku and Deith reference, which renders the claimed invention obvious. Thus, the examiner is maintaining the use of the Oku and Deith references, as previously set forth.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

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having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made

3. Claims 1-5, 8, and 13-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oku et al. in view of WO 91/08179 by Deith ("Deith").

Oku et al. and Deith are applied here for the same reasons as given above and in paragraph 6 of the previous office action.

Conclusion

4. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

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5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Barr whose telephone number is 703-305-7919. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 6:00 am-4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Shrive Beck can be reached on 703-308-2333. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 or 703-305-5408 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.



Michael Barr
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1762

MB
February 27, 2003